



2009 CHAPTER 1

Department's role in promoting and providing health and social care

Department's general duty

2.—(1) The Department shall promote in Northern Ireland an integrated system of—

- (a) health care designed to secure improvement—
 - (i) in the physical and mental health of people in Northern Ireland, and
 - (ii) in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of illness; and
- (b) social care designed to secure improvement in the social well-being of people in Northern Ireland.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1) the Department shall provide, or secure the provision of, health and social care in accordance with this Act and any other statutory provision, whenever passed or made, which relates to health and social care.

(3) In particular, the Department must—

- (a) develop policies to secure the improvement of the health and social well-being of, and to reduce health inequalities between, people in Northern Ireland;
- (b) determine priorities and objectives in accordance with section 4;
- (c) allocate financial resources available for health and social care, having regard to the need to use such resources in the most economic, efficient and effective way;
- (d) set standards for the provision of health and social care;
- (e) prepare a framework document in accordance with section 5;

- (f) formulate the general policy and principles by reference to which particular functions are to be exercised;
 - (g) secure the commissioning and development of programmes and initiatives conducive to the improvement of the health and social well-being of, and the reduction of health inequalities between, people in Northern Ireland;
 - (h) monitor and hold to account the Regional Board, the Regional Agency, RBSO and HSC trusts in the discharge of their functions;
 - (i) make and maintain effective arrangements to secure the monitoring and holding to account of the other health and social care bodies in the discharge of their functions;
 - (j) facilitate the discharge by bodies to which Article 67 of the Order of 1972 applies of the duty to co-operate with one another for the purposes mentioned in that Article.
- (4) The Department shall discharge its duty under this section so as to secure the effective co-ordination of health and social care.
- (5) In this Act—
- “health care” means any services designed to secure any of the objects of subsection (1)(a);
 - “health inequalities” means inequalities in respect of life expectancy or any other matter that is consequent on the state of a person’s health;
 - “social care” means any services designed to secure any of the objects of subsection (1)(b).